



Sound Steps

Education Engineering Enforcement for Montgomery County Communities

Montgomery County Department of Transportation
www.montgomerycountymd.gov/walk

Safe Routes to School News

November 2016

Another Successful Walk to School Day!

Fifty Montgomery County schools participated in the 2016 International Walk to School Day!

Students, parents and school staff across Montgomery County walked and biked to school on October 5th for Walk to School Day. Elected officials joined students and parents as they walked at Whetstone Elementary. Dignitaries spoke about the importance of physical activity and being safe when walking to/from school. Students also participated in an assembly sponsored by AAA Mid-Atlantic featuring Otto the Auto. He proved to be a big hit as he taught students about the importance of practicing safe pedestrian and bicycle behaviors! Many schools had impressive turn-outs and creative celebrations. Congratulations to all those who participated! Also, congratulations to the students who won prizes as part of our Walk to School Day Contest. The winners included students from Cresthaven ES, Sally K. Ride ES, Sligo Creek ES and Northwest HS. Also congratulations to Westbrook Elementary School for having the most entries in the contest for the second year in a row!

[More inside!](#)



Walk to School Day 2016 at
Whetstone Elementary School



A Walk to School Day contest entry from Sligo Creek
Elementary School!

Reminders

It's that time of the year again, when the sun rises a little earlier and the night approaches a little sooner. As children are walking, biking and in transit during the early morning dusk or evenings, Safe Routes to School strongly encourages families to think about how to travel safely in the dark. Here are some tips on how you can be safe and be seen.

- » Be visible by carrying a flashlight or flashing pedestrian safety light, apply reflective stickers to your rain coat and backpack, and/or sew-on retro-reflective tape on your jacket and coat.
- » Be alert by taking out your ear buds and putting away your phone or other distractions while you cross the street.
- » Cross busy streets at a signal or marked mid-block crossing - drivers anticipate pedestrians at these locations more than unmarked crossings.
- » Look in all directions before crossing the street and cross after all the cars have stopped or passed.
- » Make eye contact with drivers before you cross to help communicate that drivers see you.
- » Stop and look to make sure cars have stopped for you before crossing the next lane of traffic.

Thanks for doing your part to Be Safe and Be Seen!



Don't Be Distracted Creative Contest

In the Spring Montgomery County Safe Routes to School program held a contest looking for creative ideas to help educate students about the risks of walking or driving while using a mobile device. Students at all grade levels were charged with making their own artwork, essay, or 30-60 second public service announcement (PSA) video to help prevent distracted walking and driving.

A big thank you to all the students that participated from around the County. We received over 30 entries! To see the winners please visit the SRTS website at http://montgomerycountymd.gov/DOT-PedSafety/SRTS/spring_contest_winners.html.

We will be holding another contest soon so stay tuned!

For more information contact Nadji Kirby, SRTS Coordinator at 240-777-7169 or at nadji.kirby@montgomerycountymd.gov.



Welcome!

This newsletter will contain information regarding the Safe Routes to School program, pedestrian and bicycle safety topics, engineering highlights, enforcement, etc. This newsletter will be sent to school administrators, teachers, parents, volunteers, and other interested parties. Please feel free to forward this newsletter to anyone you feel would be interested or email me their address and I can add them to the list, nadji.kirby@montgomerycountymd.gov.

Nadji Kirby, Editor
MCDOT Division of Traffic Engineering & Operations

Safer Crossings at Hallie Wells Middle School!

MCPS opened Hallie Wells Middle School this fall in Clarksburg. Although the school faces Little Seneca Parkway some students use the ramp in the back that connects Skylark Road at the intersection with Yellowwood Drive. Since several students would be using this location to access the school an on-site observation was done by MCDOT Engineers. Based on the site observations as well as resident input, vehicle speeds on this stretch of Skylark Road likely exceeded the posted speed. Therefore, traffic calming measures were put into place by installing an island to reduce vehicle speeds and reduce the distance students would have to cross unprotected.



Highland View Elementary Intersection Improvement

The MCDOT Traffic division received a request to look at the intersection of Oldham Road at Lauer Terrace (Entrance of Highland View ES). The resident expressed concerns that the intersection design was too wide which caused southeast bound Lauer Terrace drivers to completely disregard the "STOP" sign. The stop sign was approximately 70 feet back to the PI.

The proposed intersection improvements are designed to correct the geometric alignment of the intersection by reducing the width of Lauer Terrace from 118' to 26'. The added "green space" will realign Lauer Terrace to be more perpendicular to Oldham Road at the point of intersection. This will allow the relocation of the "Stop" sign to a more visible and effective location. The project also calls for added ADA ramps and ladder bar crosswalks that lead directly to the school sidewalk. This project will begin soon.



If you have any questions about this project please contact Nadji Kirby, SRTS Coordinator at 240-777-7169 or nadji.kirby@montgomerycountymd.gov.



**Push the
Button!
Wait for
the Walk
Signal!**

REMEMBER: Most pedestrian signals will not automatically change to provide pedestrian crossings at locations with push buttons; the button must be pushed to activate the signals.

Safe Routes to School in Montgomery County

Targeted Education and Outreach Programs

Montgomery County's Safe Routes to School program provides safe and active walking and bicycling to and from school. It provides an opportunity to make walking and bicycling safer and more accessible for children, including those with disabilities, as well as to increase the number of children who chose to walk and bike. On a broader level Safe Routes to School can enhance children's health and well-being, ease traffic congestion near schools, improve air quality, and improve community member's overall quality of life.



Montgomery County's Safe Routes to School program is led by the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) and is supported by the Montgomery County Police Department, Montgomery County Fire Rescue Service, the Maryland Highway Safety Office, and other County and State agencies working to improve student safety. We work collaboratively with schools to develop creative solutions for school related traffic problems.

Montgomery County Department of Transportation – Safe Routes to School

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Montgomery County *Department of Transportation*

